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ABSTRACT

This paper asserts that multicultural literature must not be set aside as "other" literature, or worse, be dismissed as second class literature. The paper argues the intrinsic value of multicultural literature, and outlines class and individual activities that show the vast possibilities of stories from around the world. The following materials are included: overheads, stories and ideas for using writing, teacher directed activities, art, dress-up ideas, thinking activities, and music for Cinderella stories from various countries and traditions). Also provided are: a list of tales about giants/ghosts/dragons/witches/wizards/genies; a list of magic pot adventures; a list of flying horse/animals/carpets tales and activities; and information about festivals of lights such as Christmas, Hanukkah, Divali and Kwanzaa. Other multicultural themes the paper suggests are gradparents around the world, wonderful wearable fashions from around the world, and international cuisine. (PRA)

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MULTICULTURAL FOLKTALES: A GOLDEN MINE OF LITERATURE.

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BY LILA MEHTA, B.A., B.Ed.
TORONTO.
CANADA.

PRESENTED APRIL 5, 1991. CEC CONFERENCE, ATLANTA, GEORGIA.

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MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE: A GOLD MINE OF LITERATURE

CULTURAL SHARING THROUGH LITERATURE

Good literature is good literature whether it is multicultural or originates from the usually accepted English language texts. The world's best literature should appeal to all who are sensitive to the value of good writing that arises out of any language and culture.

A good story and any form of literature can of course have value both as a work of art, and as a work that reflects its cultural context.

Multicultural literature must not be set aside as "other" literature or worse, be dismissed as a second class literature. Each individual literary work, whatever its linguistic or cultural origin, must stand on its own as an important work of literary art.

English language stories and poems that may not be particuliarly appealling depend on their intrinsic value of creation and not on the cultural origin of their creation. Equally there are works of multicultural literature that may not have a high degree of attraction. Nevertheless, considerable literary merit does exist in the world's multicultural literature.

INTRANSIC VALUE OF MULTICULTURAL LITERATURE.

Gella Lepman, founder of the Munich International Youth Library, wrote a book called " A Bridge of Children's Books." In it she shared with us a vision of a world where children cannot fight with one another because they have come to know each other through their children's literature. One hopes that her vision would be shared by publishers, librarians, teachers and parents.

The promise is there. Literature must play a vital role in a multicultural society. In developing multicultural literature for children, one of the goals must be to foster in the child a multicultural perspective, an international outlook and the realisation that "people share many of the same feelings and needs yet express them in different ways (Ramsey). We look for stories that can show this "similarity in differences" in a way that is convincing and appealling, we explore every avenue and exploit every means to help them develop a sense of kinship with all people. We look for reality and enchantment at the same time. Ramsey, P.G. "Multicultural education in Early Childhood", Immigrant Education 7:1 (January 1982) 13-23.

Overheads of Cinderella Around the World at this point will be shown.

Every culture has a large stock of folktales, whether in oral or in written form; these can generate many activities of children to enhance their appreciation of one another's cultural heritage.

Strange as it may sound to some educators, it is through understanding and appreciating other people's cultures that children develop an increased awareness of their own culture. They realise that differences are only differant ways of expressing similar human feelings and desires. The children seeing their own lives and cultures represented in the literature they read, will no longer feel that minority means insignificant or inferior; they will come to cherish their own cultural heritage and be proud of it. This leads to enhancement of self-concept which give them a greater chance of success in school.

Multiculturalism belongs to our future, our present and our past. All of us have our roots in the traditions, language and lifestyle of at least one ethnocultural group. Multiculturism must then take its place in the values of good literature from around the world, in the educational experience afforded by our school.

We ought to reflect the full variety of cultural impulses that have existed and do exist in our society.

I believe profoundly that we must examine the values which we supposedly attach to literary efforts. It seems to me that there is a bias towards only commonly accepted forms of literature. Clearly, we need to enlarge our vision to include all good literature, all stories, all poems, all ideas and feelings.
The heart and head of good writing live everywhere. Let us embrace the values of good literature from around the world - not only as a belief in our multicultural heritage but also in a determination - to extend the accepted limits in our world of literature. I have already shown the vast possibilities of Cinderella stories from around the world. Other multicultural themes that appeal to children are:

1. Magic Pot stories Around The World
2. Flying Horse, Animals and Carpets
3. Festivals of Lights
   (Christmas, Hanukkah, Divali, Kwanzaa) etc.
4. Grandparents Around The World.
5. Wonderful Wearable Fashions From Around The World
6. International Cuisine

CINDERELLA STORIES

AROUND THE WORLD

RELATED ACTIVIES

OVERHEADS

CINDERELLA FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Name of Story	Supernatural Characters (Magic)
Cinderella **(England)** Knight, Hillary Random House of Canada	Fairy Godmother
Yeh Shen **(China)** Louie, Al - Lina Stoddart Publishing ~~30 Lesmill Road, Don Mills~~	
The Brocaded Slipper **(Vietnam)** Vuong, Lynette Dyer Addison-Wesley Publishing	
Has Anybody Seen My Umbrella? **(Canada)** Scholastic Tab Publishing	
The Indian Cinderella **(Canadian Indian)** Under The Sea Impression Holt, Rinehart, Winston et al	
The Enchanted Anklet **(India)** Mehta, Lila Lilmur Publishing 5334 Yonge St., Suite 410 Toronto, Ontario M2N 6M2	
The Magic Orange Tree **(Haiti)** Wolkstein, Diane ~~Book Centre Inc.~~	
The Egyptian Cinderella Climo, Shirley Thomas Y. Crowell New York	

Magic and supernatural characters play an important part in folk tales and fairy tales.

Make a chart like the example above and complete it.

WRITING

Choose two or three Cinderella stories that take place in different countries. Read the first paragraph to see how each story begins.

Copy the first sentence from each story.

WRITING

You are Cinderella from a country of your choice. Write a letter to a Cinderella character from another country, telling her about the work you have to do.

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TEACHER DIRECTED ACTIVITY

FOOD

Ask your teacher when your class can bring in samples of food mentioned in versions of the Cinderella story. Label food.

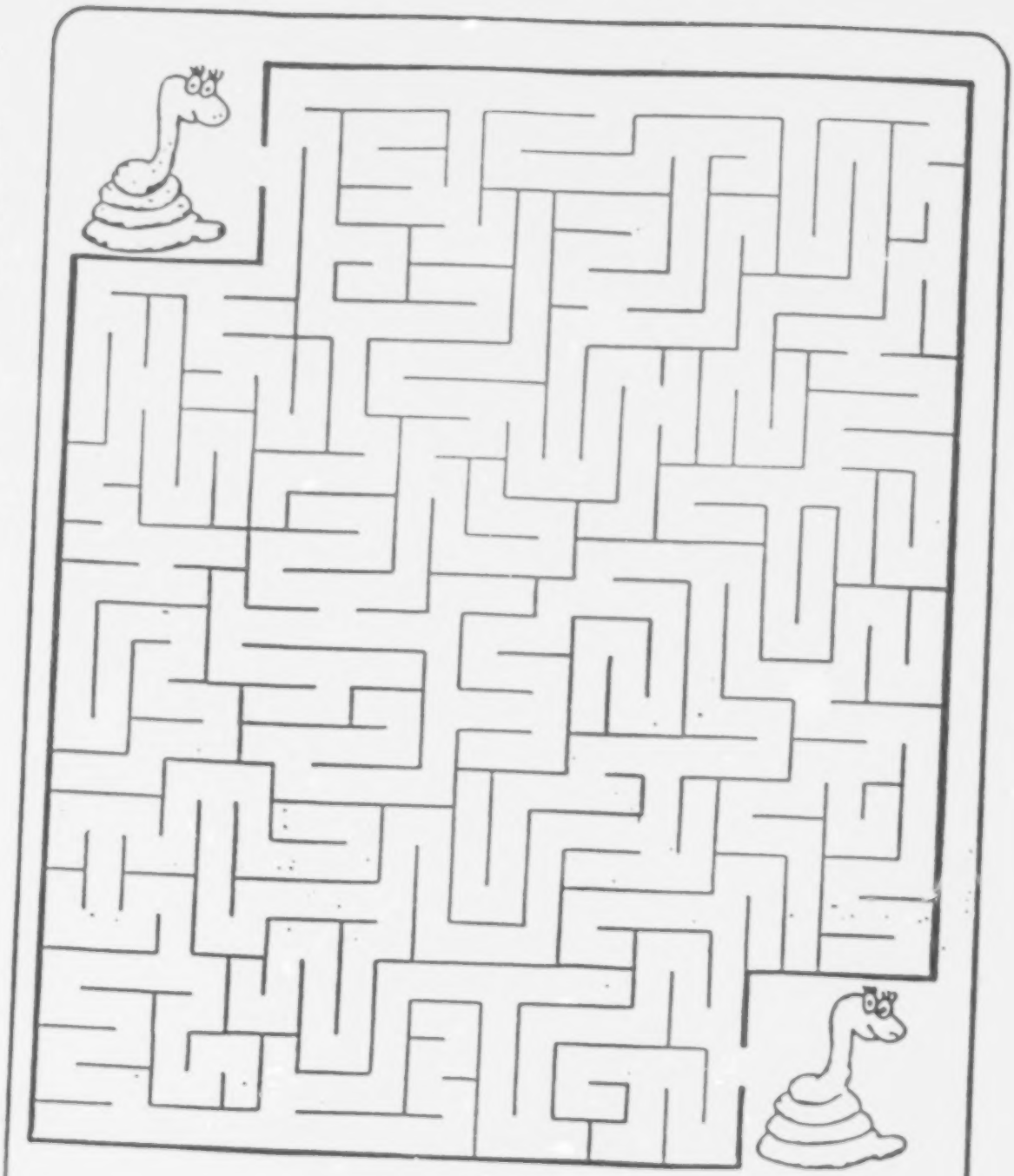
OR

As a class have a feast. Dress up. Make sure you bring in the name of your dish and the recipe or list of ingredients.

*(Dietary restrictions may prevent some children from sampling all the foods).

ART

Build a castle. Use, plasticine, lego, material, boxes or furniture.



Can you help the snake slither down through the maze?

ART

Choose two versions of Cinderella that are new to you. Draw the place that she will live in after her marriage. You may wish to get books from the library to find out about the architecture of that country and how castles or forts look.

DRESS-UP CENTRE

Organize a dress-up centre. You may wish to include some of the following items:

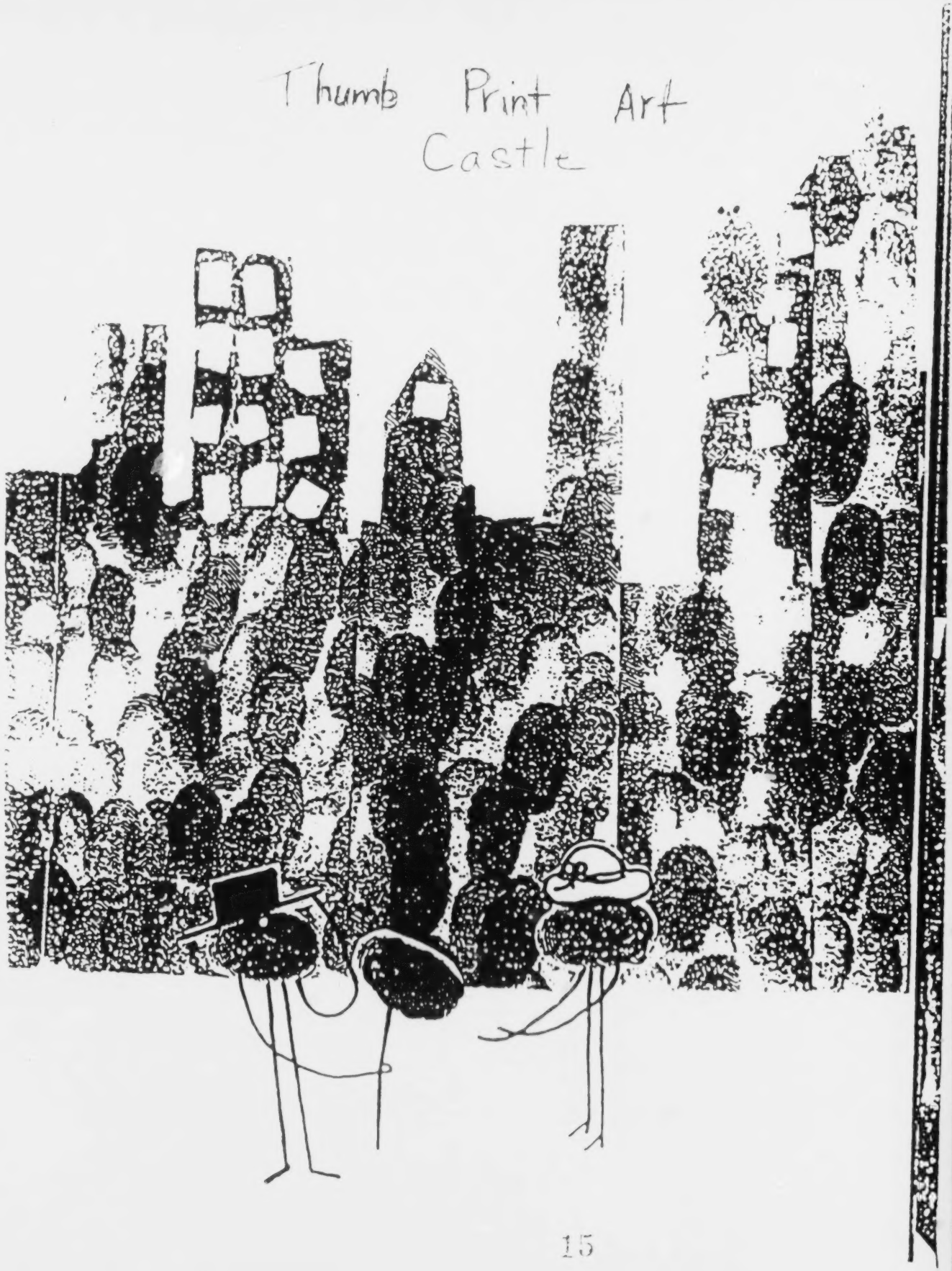
- fabric (curtains or flimsy material that can be draped)
- any items from other countries
- parasols
- ties
- brocaded Chinese slippers
- jewellery
- shoes
- an old Sari
- wigs
- Kimono
- feathers
- fans

WRITING

Write a paragraph or two telling how the story might be different if Cinderella was not kind.

Thumb Print Art

Castle



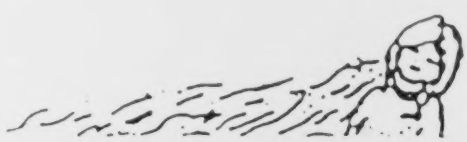
CHART

Magic plays an important part in fairy tales.

Make a chart like the example below and complete it.

Name of Story	Magic	Country
The Emperor's Nightingale		
Cinderella		
The Enchanted Anklet		
The Elves And The Shoemaker		
Aladdin And The Magic Lamp		
A Crane's Magic Gift		

You may wish to add pictures to your chart. Display your chart in the classroom.



TEACHER DIRECTED ACTIVITY

FOOD

Ask your teacher when your class can bring in samples of food mentioned in versions of the Cinderella story. Label food.

OR

As a class have a feast. Dress up. Make sure you bring in the name of your dish and the recipe or list of ingredients.

*(Dietary restrictions may prevent some children from sampling all the foods).

THINKING

What do you think happens to Cinderella after she marries the prince? Discuss your ideas with a partner or group.

CINDERELLA SONG

Cinderella was a maid, was a maid
was a maid,
With two mean stepsisters.

Stepmother was cruel to her, cruel to her
cruel to her,
Stepmother was cruel to her
She made her do all the work.

King was having a ball for his son, a ball for his son
a ball for his son
King was having a ball for his son
And inviting everyone.

Cinderella was left at home
was left at home(2)
Cinderella was left at home
And Fairy Godmother came to help.

The prince saw Cinderella at the ball
at the ball (2)
The prince saw Cinderella at the ball
And fell in love with her.

Cinderella had to leave
had to leave (2)
Cinderella had to leave
Before her <u>things</u> disappeared.

The girl who fitted the slipper
the slipper (2)
The girl who fitted the slipper
The prince shall marry.

The maid fitted the slipper
the slipper (2)
The maid fitted the slipper
And married the prince.

Marigayle Sutter's Gr.5 Class
Chief Dan George P.S
Scarborough

WRITING

Choose two or three Cinderella stories that take place in different countries. Read the first paragraph to see how each story begins.

Copy the first sentence from each story.

THINKING

Choose several of the following and organize your ideas to share with others.

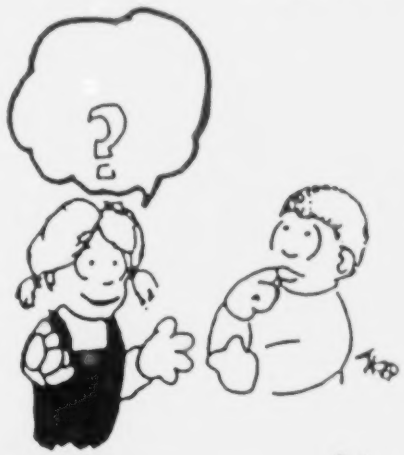
In a family, who gets the best treatment: the oldest or the youngest, the boys or the girls? Should anyone get better treatment than anyone else? Why?

If you were Cinderella, and the eldest sister asked you which dress looked best on her, would it be fair for you to lie? Why?

Cinderella did not tell her sisters that she had gone to the ball. Was this right? Why?

If you were Cinderella, would you forgive your stepsisters? Why? If you think they should be punished, what should their punishment be? Why would that be fair?

In fairy tales, the most beautiful person is often the most kind and charming. Is this true in real life?



How would you, the magician or genie change things the way you would like them to be?

What would you make yummy so that it would taste better?

_____

Name an animal you would give wings to so that it would fly and take you to the Land of Dreams.

_____

What would you make octagonal so that it would look very attractive?

_____

What would you make go sideways in order to save space?

_____

What would you make invisible to play a joke on someone?

_____

What would you make heavier so that it would last longer?

_____

What would happen if elephants were the size of toy poodles?

_____

What would happen if someone had an invisible extra pair of hands?

_____

What would happen if pigs could fly?

_____

What would happen if your body turned purple overnight?

_____

What would you turn golden or silver so that it would be more valuable?

_____

Look around you. Pick an article. What would you make automatic so it would be faster?

_____

If Tyrannosaurus Rex could visit you, how would you like to greet him? Draw and colour a picture of this meeting.

GIANTS, GHOSTS, DRAGONS, WITCHES, WIZARDS, GENIES

Myths and legends of many nations. Every nation has at least one giant, dragon, ghost, genie or witch story.

Western

- fierce
- Inimical

Chinese (Dragon)

- kingly
- benevolent power

EAST INDIAN & ARABIC

- fierce
- wicked

1. Jack and the Beanstalk

2. Chin Chiang and the Dragon Dance
   Douglas Wallace & Ian McIntyre, Vancouver/Toronto

3. The Iliad and the Odyssey
   Adapted by Jane Werner Watson, Golden Press, New York.

4. Bakasur
   Tales from Indian Classics, Book 2
   Children's Book Trust, Indraprastha Press, New Delhi
   Imported by Oxfam Activities, Oxford, U.K.

   Bhimsen, a male warrior takes revenge and kills the evil giant. (An echo of this story appears in the Greek classics. Minotaur, a half beast and half human demands a human to be sent to his cave every week for his feast. Ariadne, a princess comes up with a solution.)

5. Giant Snape, Juliet and Charles

An ecological fairy tale about a village that takes their mountain for granted.

6. Aladdin and His Magic Lamp

A genie helps a young boy and saves him from doom.

7. The Ghost of Soda Creek, Walsh, Ann

Kelly and David are drawn together by the appearance of a little girl's ghost and the mystery of her past.

8. The Midnight Horse, Fleishman, Sid

An easy to read adventure about an orphan boy who, with the help of a friendlymagician ghost outwits his great-uncle who is a swindler.

9. The Wizard of Oz, Baum, R.
Ladybird Books Inc., Lewiston, Maine, U.S.A.

10. Winnie The Witch
Paul, Korky and Thomas, Valerie

11. The Ghost - Eye Tree
Martin, Bill Jr. and Archambautt, John

12. The Witch of Blackbird Pond
George Speare, Elizabeth,
Dell Publishing Inc. New York, U.S.A.

MAGIC POT ADVENTURES

1. Stone Soup
   McGovern, Ann
   Scholastic Book Services

2. The Wishing Pot
   Magic and Make-Believe, Book One
   Thomas Nelson & Sons (Canada) Ltd.

3. Pasta Possibilities
   An integrated Activity Approach to Strega Nona and Related Stories.
   Braun and Braun Educational Enterprises, Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

4. My Grandmother's Cookie Jar
   Miller, Montzalee
   Price/Stern/Sloan Inc. Los Angeles

   Preservation of a family story; how grandmother and granddaughter come together on a reservation because of their solid roots.

5. Cloudy With A Chance of Meatballs
   Barrett, Jodi
   Aladdin Books
   Macmillan Publishing Co., New York

6. The Wolf's Chicken Stew
   Keiko, Kasza
   G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York

7. Hot Fudge
   Howe, James
   Morrow Junior Books
   105 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016

   Mmmmmm! Chewy, chocolate, melt-in-your-mouth fudge disappears. Harold the dog, Chester the cat, Howie the dachshund and puppy have to find Bunnicula Vampire rabbit, who knows what happened!

8. The Cake that Mack Ate
   Rolart, Rose
   Kids' Can Press

9. Growing Vegetable Soup
   Ehlert, Lois

10. Potato Pancakes All Around, A Hanukkah Tale
    Hirsh, Marilyn

11. How Pizza Came to Our Town
    Khalsa, Dayal Kaur
    Tundra Books, Montreal, Canada

12. The High Rise Glorious Skittle Skat Roarious Sky Pie Angel Food Cake
    Willard, Nancy

    A beautiful story about a secret recipe, the joy of giving and magic. Splendid illustrations.

13. The Magician and The Sorcerer
    McKee, David
    Pan Books Ltd. London

14. The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe
    Lewis, C.B.S.
    Collins Publishers, London, U.K.

15. The House of the Good Spirits
    Kushner, Donn

    A young boy who encounters racism after moving from Nigeria to Ontario discovers the spirits of the blacks in the days of the Underground Railway when he enters the "haunted house" on a dare.

16. Boo
    Cecil, Laura

A collection of humorous spooky stories and poems, both traditional and contemporary. Fun to read aloud.

17. Tikta, Liktak
Houston, James

A young Eskimo hunter fights against the elements of the Arctic wilderness with the help of a sea spirit, who comes to him in a dream and gives him hope.

18. Beef Stew (Pre-school, Grade 1 Step into reading)
Brenner, Barbara
Random House, New York

The Blessed Pot

Crown Prince Yudhisthira, of Hastinapore and his four brothers, commonly known as the Pandavas in East Indian literature, lost their kingdom in a game of dice. They had to honour their agreement to go and live in a forest for twelve years, and then live for one more year secretly.

With the chief queen Draupadi, they lived in the forest for twelve years. Duryodhana, their wicked cousin ruled Hastinapore, and always planned to destroy the Pandavas.

One day, the sage Durvasa went to Duryodhana with his ten thousand disciples. Knowing the sage's temper, Duryodhana paid careful attention to all matters connected with the reception of the guests and was so lavish in his hospitality that the sage was gratified and told him to ask any boon.

Duryodhana felt greatly relieved at having come so safely out of the ordeal. When the sage asked him to seek a boon, it occurred to him that here was an opportunity of letting the irritable sage be angry with the Pandavas. He said: "You have blessed us, great sage, by accepting our hospitality. Our brothers are in the forest. Kindly visit them also, so that they may likewise be honoured and happy," and suggested for the visit a time when he knew that all the food prepared would have been eaten and none would be left for unexpected guests.

The sage, who liked always to test people, consented to do as Duryodhana had requested.

Duryodhana felt sure that the Pandavas, who themselves lived from hand to mouth in the forest, would be unable to entertain the sage and his pupils, and would receive a dreadful curse. This would give him greater joy than any benefit he could have asked for himself when the sage offered a boon.

Durvasa went with his disciples to the Pandavas.

As a result of the austerities of Yudhishthira at the beginning of their stay in the forest, the Sun god had given him the Akshayapatra, a wonderful vessel which held a never-failing supply of food. In making the gift, the god had said, "Through this I shall place at your disposal for twelve years as much food as is required for your daily needs. Not till everyone has been served and Draupadi herself has taken her share will the vessel become empty for the day."

Accordingly the holy men and other guests would be served first. Afterwards, the Pandava brothers would take their meals. Finally, Draupadi would have her share. When Durvasa reached the place, all of them, including Draupadi had eaten tneir meals and so the vessel was empty and without any power for the day.

Draupadi was greatly troubled and perfectly at a loss to find food when the sage and his disciples should return after their bath and prayers. She prayed earnestly to Krishna to come to her help in this hopeless predicament and deliver her from the wrath of the sage.

At once Krishna appeared before her. "I am very hungry," he said, "bring without delay something to eat and we shall speak of other things afterwards."

Here was a pretty pass. It looked as though the ally from whom she hoped for relief had gone over to the foe! She cried out in great confusion: "Alas! Why do you try me thus, O Krishna? The power of the vessel given by the Sun is exhausted for the day. And the sage Durvasa has come. What shall I do? The sage and his disciples will soon be here and as though this were not enough, you have also come to this moment saying that you are hungry."

Krishna said: "I am terribly hungry and want food, no excuses. Fetch the vessel and let me see for myself."

Draupadi was filled with shame at her carelessness in not having cleaned the vessel free of all remnants. A bit had been left which had been partaken by Vasudeva (Krishna).

Krishna seemed satisfied after eating his solitary grain and calling Bhima, told him to go to the river and inform the revered sage that dinner was ready and waiting for him.

Bhimasena, greatly puzzled, but full of faith in Krishna, hastened to the river where Durvasa and his followers were bathing. They were in great surprise to find that their ravenous hunger had given place to a feeling of great satisfaction. They had all the comfortable cheerfulness of people who had feasted well. The disciples told the sage, "We have come here after asking Yudhishthira to prepare dinner for us, but we feel well-fed and full and cannot eat anything more." Durvasa knew what it was and he told Bhima: "We have eaten our meals. Tel Yudhishthira to forgive us." Then the party went away. MAHABHARATA

Contributed by Lila Mehta

FLYING HORSE, ANIMALS AND CARPETS

1. Pegasus
   Myths and Legends, Golden Press
   or
   Bellerophone and Pegasus Story

2. Kasturi, The Magic Ring
   Lilmur Publishing, 5334 Yonge Street, Suite 410
   Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5M 2X3

3. Magician's Nephew
   C.B.S. Lewis
   Collins Publishers, London, U.K.

   A flying horse transports two lost children in a make-believe land (Distributed widely in North American by major Children's Bookstores).

4. Khufu, the Wonder Cat
   Blackfish Press, 1851 Moore Avenue, Burnaby, B.C., Canada

5. The Magic Carpet
   McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd.
   Tony's magic carpet takes him for an incredible ride.

6. Drat the Dragon
   Garrard Publishing Company, Champaign, Illinois

7. The Flying Horse Machine
   by Barbara Wincher
   Run Forever, Impressions
   Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada Ltd.

8. Myths and Enchantment Tales
   by Evelyn Urbanowich

ASHVIN

Ashvin in East Indian mythology was a winged horse of great prowess.

According to one legend, his father was the Sun god, his mother was Ranna or Randal, a village goddess.

Having such a powerful father and divine mother, any one who could ride him had the blessing of all other nature gods, especially Varuna, god of wind. One could ride him from one place to another in a split second.

Wings Ahoy!

Magic Touch

Illustrate Your Favourite Parts of This Book

"The Magician's Nephew"
By C.B.S Lewis
Collins Publishers, London, U.K

Want To Hire Ashvin ?

WINGED HORSE FOR SALE!

You have been given the opportunity to purchase a winged horse. The horse can carry you anywhere you want to go.

On the lines below list all the advantages and disadvantages you can think of for owning a winged horse.

After listing the advantages and disadvantages decide whether or not you will accept the horse.

_____ yes _____ no

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES

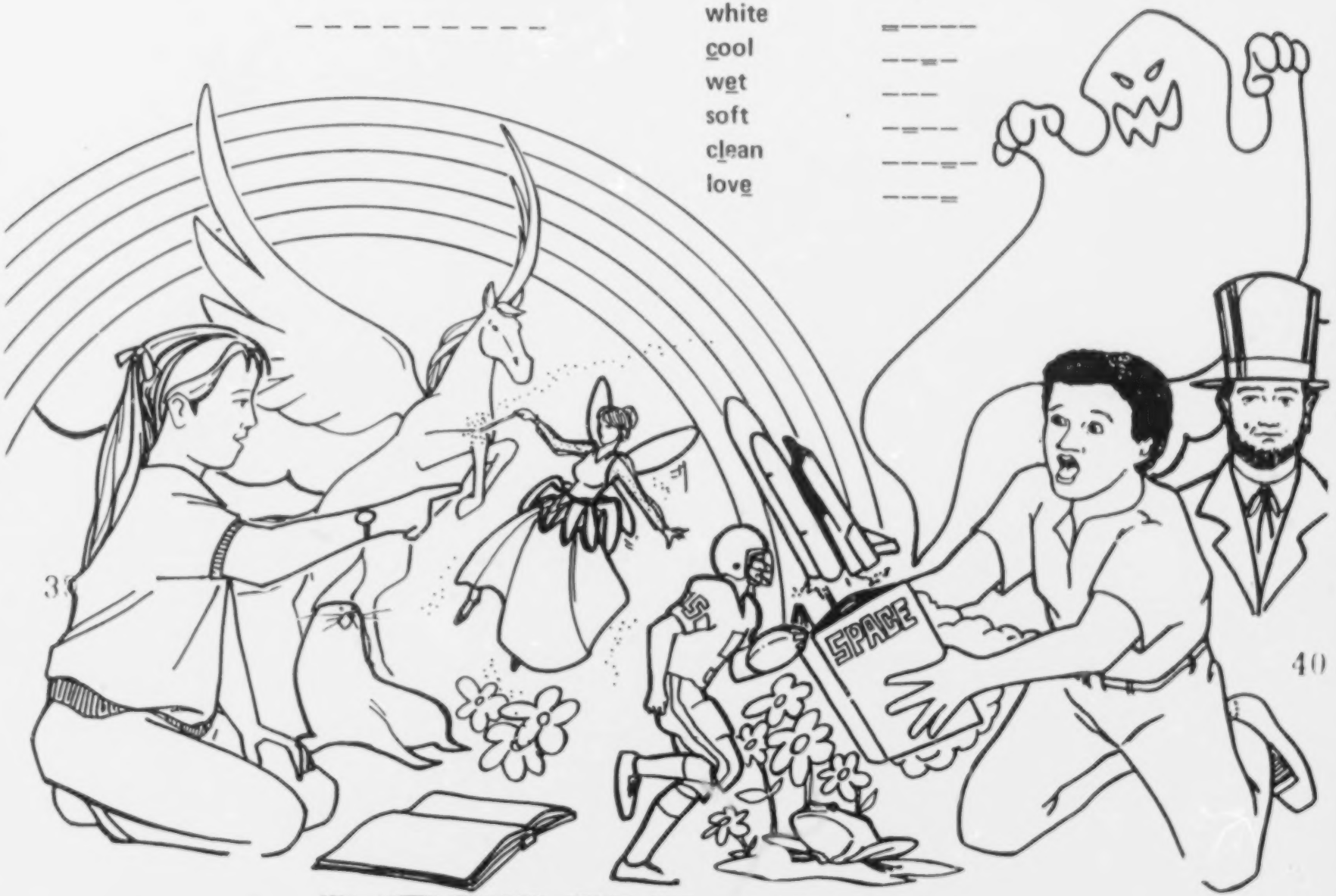
"Fairy Tales & Folk Tales"
Nancy Polette
O'Fallon, Mo. U.S.A

OPPOSITES

Find the opposites to the words listed below. Then take the underlined letters from Column A and Column B to spell something special.

A	B
white	=----
cool	--=-
wet	---
soft	-=--
clean	---=-
love	---=

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _



Kastun, The Magic King

Acknowledgment: "The Magician's Nephew" C.B.S Lewis Collins Publishers, London, U.K

Designing a Wedding Feast

Fairy tales often end with a royal wedding. List below as many delicious dishes that you can think of which will be served at a wedding.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Design a wedding feast for the couple in the tale you choose.

Although families are breaking up at nuclear levels, it is still safe to talk about grandparents.

Langner, Nola

FREDDY, MY GRANDFATHER
Scholastic, 1979

Freddy is a zany, fun-loving individual whose character is depicted on each page. The first "grandperson" account of their relationship can only make readers feel happy to have made the acquaintance of this man.

Lim, John

AT GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE
Tundra Books, 1977

A portable gallery of exquisite paintings illustrate Lim's journey back to his childhood and his savoury memories of times spent at his grandmother's house outside of Singapore.

[redacted]
[redacted]ARENTS AROUND T[redacted]ORLD
[redacted]

E
301.427
R

This book presents forty-six photographs of children and their grandparents from around the world. These black-and-white photographs radiate in "technicolour" the very special grandparent-grandchild relationship.

Stanovich, Betty Jo

BIG BOY, LITTLE BOY
Lothrop, 1984

David is big now - he can build a great big train that goes clickety-clack and draw a wonderful picture of himself and his grandmother. But David is still not too big to enjoy climbing up on his grandmother's lap and remember with her about when he was little. Soft watercoloured pictures paint the mood.

Stevenson, James

"COULD BE WORSE!"
Greenwillow, 1977

Much to their consternation, Mary Anne and Louie's grandfather has the same complacent reply to everything - "Could be worse." When at breakfast one morning he attempts to dazzle them with a harrowing story of what happened to him the night before (complete with squishing giants and pursuing marmalade blobs), their response is "Could be worse!"

Townsend, Maryann and Stern, Ronnie

J
158.24
TOW

POP'S SECRET
Addison-Wesley, 1980

"I liked having Pop live in our house. He wasn't famous or anything, but he was just nice." With photographs and text Mark has put together a tribute to his grandfather - a tribute to the mutual love between grandparent and child.

Williams, Barbara

KEVIN'S GRANDMA
Dutton, 1975

Kevin wows his friend with stories of his liberated grandma who teaches him judo, loves to sky-dive and allows him to partake in midnight pizza feasts!

Zolotow, Charlotte

MY GRANDSON LEW
Harper Row, 1974

Simple, watercoloured illustrations captivate all the feelings aroused when Lewis calls for his mom in the middle of the night and they share their memories of Lewis' dead grandfather, whom they both miss very much.

Addendum:
Watson, Joy
Ashton Scholastic, New York.
Grandpa's Slippers

Khalsa, Dayal Kaur
Tundra Books, Canada.
Tales of A Gambling Grandma.

Miller, Montzalee
Price/Stern/Sloan Inc. Los Angeles.
My Grandmother's Cookie Jar
Grandma and granddaughter come together because of their solid roots. Preservation of a family story.

Chase, Richard
Grandfather's Tales.

Gilman, Phoebe
Grandma and the Pirates.

Parsons, Les
Writing In The Real Classrooms
P. 33
Pembroke Publishers
Canada

Naomi Larry
Children's Librarian
Scarborough Public Library Board

Eisenberg, Phyllis Rose

A MITZVAH IS SOMETHING SPECIAL
Harper Row, 1978

Lisa's two grandmothers are very different. Grandma Esther loves to cook and bake while grandmother Dorrie detests cooking but tells good stories and plays a mean flute. They both love Lisa and her love for them prompts her to do a mitzvah (a good deed), that all three will remember for always.

Henriod, Lorraine

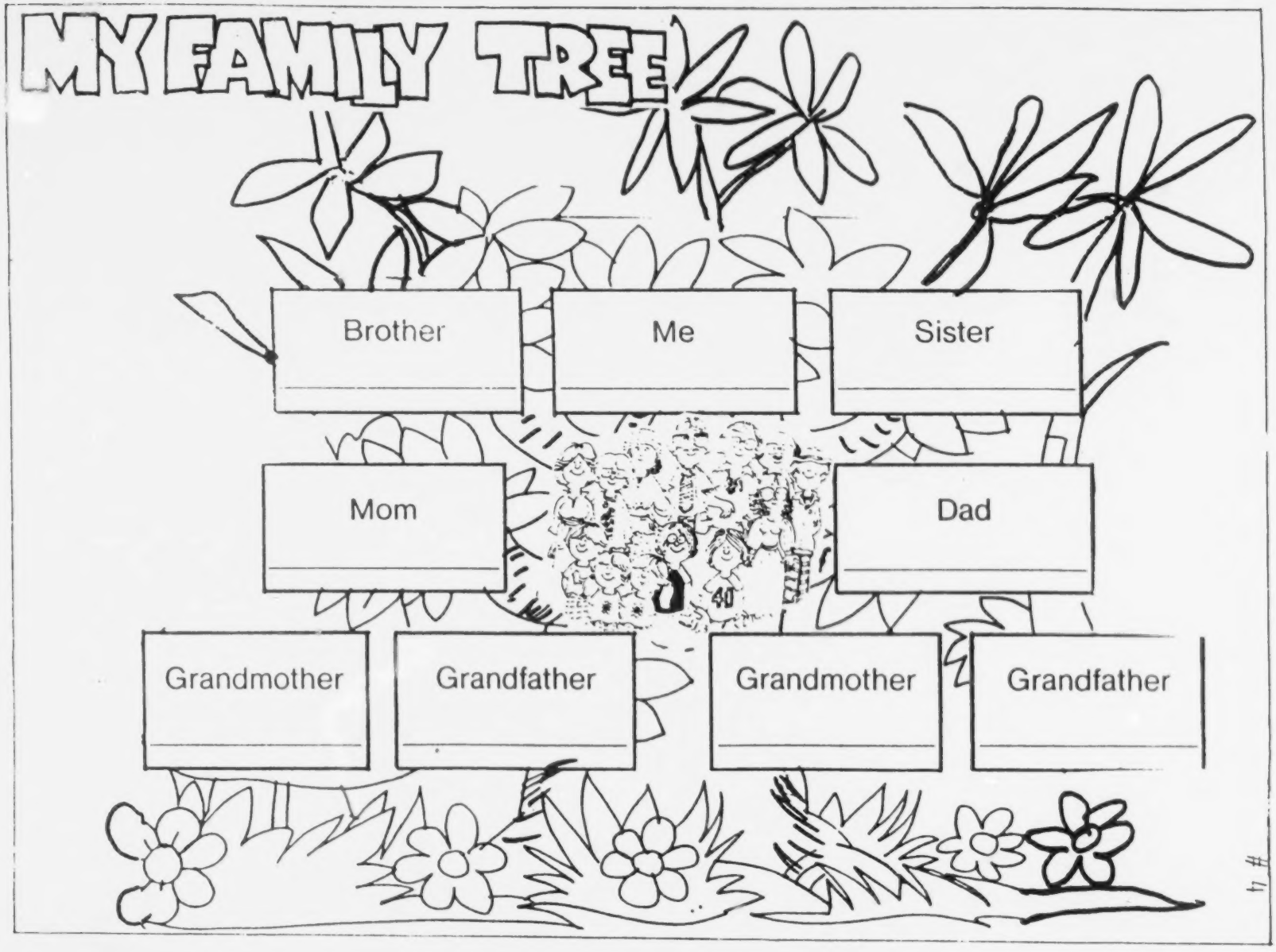
GRANDMA'S WHEELCHAIR
A. Whitman, 1982

A special friendship exists between rambunctious four-year-old Thomas and his invalid grandmother whom he adores. They cuddle and read stories and he is a great help with her household chores. Energetic, amusing illustrations paint this heart-warming camaraderie.

Kroll, Steven

TOOT! TOOT!
Holiday, 1983

While playing with his train set Laurence imagines he is travelling to visit his grandparents out in the country. Toot! Toot! he shouts as the train whizzes on and he reminisces about past visits. Imagine his delight when he "awakens" to find his grandparents have come to take him home with them for the weekend - for real!


MY FAMILY TREE
Brother
Me
Sister
Mom
Dad
Grandmother
Grandfather
Grandmother
Grandfather

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

CHRISTMAS

HANUKKAH

DIVALI

KWANZAA

Display of candles, menorah, diva (East Indian clay lamps) candalabras, lamps.

Victory of Light over Darkness.

Light represents knowledge and wisdom, so victory of knowledge over ignorance.

UNICEF

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INTRODUCTION

THE FESTIVALS OF LIGHT MULTIMEDIA KIT is designed to introduce audiences to similarities and differences in the way festivals of light are celebrated around the world and to stimulate interest in the lives and cultures of the people portrayed.

AGE RANGE—The kit is versatile. The universality of the theme, the high-interest quality of the visuals, as well as the script, background notes, program suggestions, and bibliography make it suitable for use with groups of adults and older children. Teachers can adapt the kit for classroom use by adding questions appropriate to the students' level. The written script may be simplified for young children; the guide offers suggestions for relating the thematic content of the slide set to their experience by employing methods that emphasize concrete "hands-on" activities. These activity-orientated experiences are based on programs conducted with school-age children at the Information Center on Children's Cultures.

USE—The kit is flexible. Although ideally intended for use as an integral part of an in-depth study program on festivals of light, individuals, families, or groups may wish to use the slide set and recorded narration only; or, they may want to enrich their own preparation for the holiday season by incorporating crafts, songs, recipes, and other customs from several countries or cultures described. The festivals of light featured in this kit almost all cluster around the late autumn and winter months (October through December in the Northern Hemisphere), but you may extend your study during the following months to include many other festivals taking place at other times of the year in which fire and light figure prominently. WHATEVER YOU DECIDE TO DO, BE SURE THAT YOU COVER A WIDE VARIETY OF COUNTRIES, ETHNIC GROUPS, AND RELIGIONS. Check beforehand that local sources of information are readily available.

PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS—The kit can be used as the basis of a one-time program or as a series of programs and/or classroom activities spread out over a few weeks or months. In preparation, the leader/teacher should preview the background notes and suggested activities. At the time the slide set is presented, the slides may be run through twice, the first time without the accompanying narration, then with it. Or, the slides and narration may be used on a first run, followed

by a second viewing without narration, while drawing from the audience specific details to stimulate further discussion.

To expand and reinforce what has been learned from the slide presentation, students/viewers may choose or be assigned to research one of the festivals and prepare a 5–10 minute lecture–demonstration to be held on or near that holiday. During follow-up discussion, basic anthropological and cultural concepts can be made explicit, questions raised, misconceptions cleared up, and relevant areas explored. Relating the materials to the audience's own experiences and sensibilities extends their grasp of ideas beyond the viewing itself, and helps them acquire a healthy perspective from which to observe the way people celebrate—from the point of view of the celebrants themselves.

For young children, *doing* something—creating something tangible that can be identified with and shared—makes real and immediate what, at first, may be experienced as strange. As they—and we—enlarge our understanding of others, self-knowledge grows. With that knowledge comes respect and admiration for the people of our world who, alone among earth's creatures, exalt their lives in celebration.

A FESTIVALS OF LIGHT CELEBRATION—Staging a celebration for others is a festive and fitting culmination to the weeks or months of study and preparation. An outline of one such program is included in the guide. During the presentation, each featured festival could be introduced by the individual(s) who researched it and members of the audience invited to participate in its "celebration."

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW: HONORING THE SUN

All over the world, throughout the year, children and their families celebrate feasts, festivals, and holidays. One celebration that appears time and again is a festival having to do with fire and light. Some festivals can be traced back to earlier ceremonies; others, having disappeared in one place, surfaced elsewhere at a later date transformed into new patterns reflecting the experiences and needs of later celebrants. As people met and mingled at cultural crossroads, they absorbed elements of one another's myths and rituals, adapting and giving new meaning to those symbols that expressed their own visions.

One of those universally shared symbols is the primordial image of the divine light shed by the sun. Buried in the roots of human culture lie centuries of solar worship in which light and fire were used in ceremonies celebrating the sun's creative energy. By and large, these rituals originated among agricultural people whose food supply depended on an intimate knowledge of the effect of sunlight on the planting, growing, and harvesting of crops. In the recurring seasonal cycle of vegetable growth and decay, they pictured the birth, death, and resurrection of agricultural deities. To our early ancestors the destiny of the human race was seen as inexorably linked to that of the sun. At the spring and autumn equinox and at the summer solstice, ceremonies of light and fire were performed to strengthen the sun's life-giving powers. The winter solstice, the shortest day of the year, was one of the most critical turning points in the cycle of the seasons. As the days grew shorter following the autumn equinox, early people feared that the sun might disappear. They built huge bonfires to return to the sun some of the energy that was its gift to the world. When, following the winter solstice, the sun seemed to change course and the days grew longer, people celebrated.

ROMAN—One such celebration was the age-old observance of the Saturnalia. Honoring the Roman god of the sowing of the grain, a deity of bountiful abundance, it took place in Rome between December 17 and 24. It was a time of general rejoicing, hilarity, feasting, and merrymaking. Wars and work ceased, and gifts, toys, and food were shared in a spirit of fellowship and friendship. Evergreens and berries were brought inside to dispel the gloom of winter. On December 25 tribute was paid to the birth (*natalis*) of the Invincible Sun (*Sol Invictus*)—Mithra, the god of light in ancient Persian mythology. The worship

of Mithra was widespread during the first century A.D. and its adherents were found throughout India, Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, and Europe.

PERSIAN—Fire was sacred in many cultures and came to be regarded as a symbol of divine power. The ancient Persians—who followed the religious teachings of Zoroaster (who lived in the 6th century B.C.)—worshiped Ahura Mazda, an invisible god whose symbol was the pure light of the sun. The sacred fire was honored at home and in the temple and was identified with the holy spirit.

The Parsis, most of whom live today in India, are followers of Zoroaster. At the end of November they celebrate a festival in which they carry sixteen fires in procession. The fire represents the spiritual rule of light and truth in its war against the powers of darkness. Their priests, who tend the fire, are descendants of the Magi—the ancient priests of Persia. Three of the Magi were the "wise men of the East" who are said to have journeyed with gifts of gold, myrrh, and frankincense toward the Star of Bethlehem, heralding the birth of a new "god of light."

New periods need new festivals, new interpretations, and new symbols. Rites and ceremonies carried over from earlier festivals are assigned meanings that reflect later beliefs. Today's winter solstice festivals, for example, may no longer celebrate the agricultural cycle, but the concept of the sun's life-enhancing power lives on in the belief, shared by many cultures, that it is the sun's Creator that is the embodiment of the light that is life. The widespread use of light as a life-affirming symbol of goodness, truth, and knowledge can serve as a starting point for a study of the common needs and concerns of people the world over.

THE AMERICAS—Though religious beliefs varied greatly throughout the Americas, the sun was worshiped everywhere as one of the chief gods because of its close association with the seasonal growth cycle of maize, the most important crop in both North and South America. In North America those who farmed the land considered the sun to be the actual source of life. Fire was its representative on earth. In South America the Incas worshiped Inti ("Light"), a kind and generous sun god represented as a golden disk with a human face, who they believed was their ancestor. Each year at the time of the winter solstice (Peru being in the Southern Hemisphere, this event occurs in June), the Incas, most of whom were farmers, celebrated Inti Raymi, "Thanksgiving to the Sun." During this great festival they kindled a sacred flame

symbolizing the light to come in the lengthening days ahead. Following their conversion to Christianity, the Incas came to identify the Christian God with the sun god and the Virgin Mary with Pachamama, the earth goddess. Today millions of the Quechua descendants of the Incas continue to combine traditional sun-worship with Christian ritual at the annual reenactment in Cuzco of the Inti Raymi during the modern-day celebration of Dia del Campesino.

The Huichol Indians, living high in the mountainous Sierra Madre of western Mexico, are related to the Aztecs. An agricultural people, their festivals celebrate the crops, the seasons, and the deities or forces associated with the earth's fertility. *Nearikas*, traditional representations of the "faces" of the gods who govern their lives, serve as tangible prayers or votive offerings. The myths, legends, and ceremonies depicted depend for their interpretation on the design and arrangement of the figures used. Though mostly drawn from nature, the form of the birds, trees, animals, and other objects is highly stylized and the colors used are not realistic. Yarn and beeswax tablet paintings are but one of the mediums used to depict *nearikas*.

EGYPTIAN—The greater part of Egyptian mythology deals with the appearance, disappearance, and reappearance of the sun and with descriptions of the world of the dead. Throughout their long history the ancient Egyptians worshiped many deities, but their supreme god was the god of the sun, Ra (Rê), creator of the world and the giver of light and life. His crown was a solar disk (*Aton* or *Aten*), from which emanated rays of light. At the ends of the rays were small hands offering the symbol of life (*ankh*) to the world.

The annual ritual reenactments of the death and resurrection of Osiris, representing the seasonal decay and growth of vegetation, were performed to ensure that life would continue to appear on earth. Even in the warm climate of Egypt, where seasons were not sharply defined and the growth of fruit and grain depended on the annual flooding of the Nile, people worshiped the sun as the life that dwelt in the grain. Eventually the worship of the sun god was supplanted by the worship of three of the greatest and most popular Egyptian deities, Osiris, Isis, and Horus the Child. In this form they passed into Greece, and later Rome, and became identified with the "Mysteries" (religious beliefs and ceremonies connected to agriculture and rebirth that were associated with the worship of Demeter, Dionysus, and Orpheus). Osiris embodies the

fertility of green plants that appear in spring; Isis personifies the fertile soil's power to quicken this life; and Horus, the "fruit" that Isis bore, is the sunlight that restores the natural order and assures that the cycle of life will be repeated. Horus vanquishes his father's slayer, Set, a god of darkness and evil. Osiris dies, yet is alive and reigns in the underworld as king of the dead and lord of eternity. His rebirth offered hope of life after death to the ancient Egyptians. He is the judge of the dead and Horus is their advocate before his father's throne. Parallel myths of death and resurrection were told throughout the ancient world, such as those of Attis and Cybele, Baal and Astarte, Thammuz and Ishtar, Adonis and Aphrodite, and Demeter and Persephone.

SUMERIAN AND BABYLONIAN—The Temple of the Sun at Sippar in ancient Mesopotamia was the home of Shamash ("Sun"), the Sumerian solar deity and god of justice and healing who was later worshiped by the Babylonians and Assyrians. The pillar on which Hammurabi, founder of the first Babylonian Empire, had his famous code of laws recorded depicts the ruler receiving the laws from Shamash. A large sun disk, representing the flaming wheel of the chariot in which Shamash crosses the sky from east to west, rests on the altar and is a symbol of the light of righteousness that illuminates the code of Hammurabi.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES: Discuss the importance of light. What does fire or light symbolize? How do group members use light during winter celebrations? Have group members find out how their families and relatives have used light at these festivals. Focus on different ethnic traditions, foods, clothing, and games. When the reports are done, share the information. Invite people from other countries (possibly exchange students) to talk about their festivals of light.

LET'S CELEBRATE: Collect photos of each person's family celebrating a winter festival. Connect the photos to the appropriate countries of origin on a world map and use as a display.

THINGS TO MAKE: Make *nearikas* (in the form of yarn paintings) and sun masks.

DIVALI – HINDU

Divali is celebrated throughout India and by Hindus everywhere. According to calculations based on the Hindu calendar, the festival takes place in late October or early November and is celebrated in honor of Lakshmi – benevolent mother goddess, wife of Vishnu, and the personification of abundance and good fortune (*lakshmi*). The golden lotus, symbol of her life-giving power, is also the symbol of the sun's creative energy. Divali also commemorates the triumph of good over the forces of evil: the great Indian hero Rama defeats the ten-headed demon king Ravana. As told in the *Ramayana*, the oldest Sanskrit epic, Rama's subjects welcome him and his beloved wife Sita upon their return home by lighting lamps throughout the kingdom.

Everywhere in India Divali marks the beginning of the commercial New Year, a time for businesses to settle old debts and open their new account books. Shops are gaily decorated and adorned with pictures of Lakshmi and Ganesha, the elephant-headed god of wisdom and new beginnings. After spending weeks scrubbing their homes inside and out, relatives and friends visit one another, exchange gifts, and join the holiday crowds buying cakes, candy, fireworks, and gaily painted clay or papier-mâché toys in the shape of birds, peacocks, cows, and other animals. Children place the toys on the family altar before a garlanded picture or statue of Lakshmi, light incense sticks, and address prayers for prosperity to the goddess.

Children also arrange hundreds of *dipas* (small clay saucers filled with oil and a wick) on window sills and on the edges of the low flat roofs of their houses. At sunset, by the light of hundreds of thousands of *dipas* that have been placed along roads and on the banks of rivers, Lakshmi will find her way back to earth. Shunning dark places, she is said to bring her New Year blessings only to those homes where she sees the flickering flames of the *dipa* lamps. Street processions with fireworks and sparklers take place later in the evening, in an attempt to turn the night into day with the brightness of fire and light.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES: Locate India on a map or globe. Find out more about Divali. Find out about the Hindu religion. Find out about Surya, the Vedic sun god, and Agni, the god of fire. Find out about Pongal, the festival honoring Surya. Who is Vishnu? Who is Rama?

What is an *avatar*? Why is Sita considered to be Lakshmi in another form? What is Sanskrit? On what system (lunar, solar, etc.) is the Hindu calendar based? Read the story about Rama and Sita in the *Ramayana*.

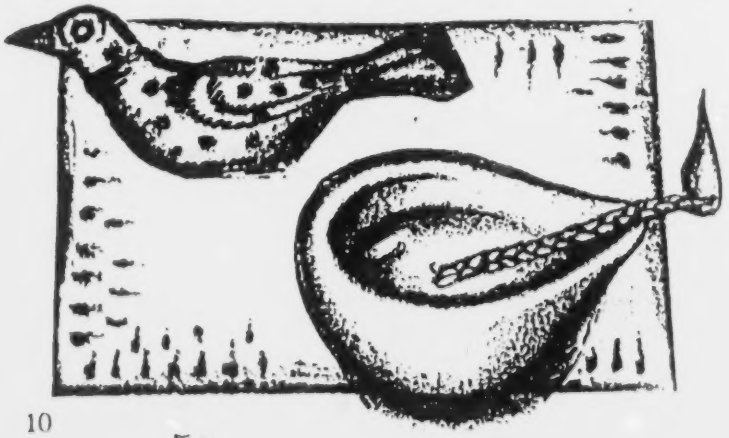
LET'S CELEBRATE: Listen to Indian festival music; prepare a tape for the festivals of light celebration; convert a table, desk, or shelf into an altar with pictures of Lakshmi and Ganesha, *dipas*, and Divali toys.

THINGS TO MAKE: DIPAS AND DIVALI TOYS

YOU WILL NEED: Clay, cotton string wicks for *dipas*, vegetable oil, tempera paints and brushes, small pan of water, and orange stick or pointed clay modeling tool.

DIPAS – Roll a 2" ball of clay between your palms. Push one thumb and then the other into the center to start a small pinch pot. Continue pressing and shaping on a flat surface until the clay looks like a shallow bowl. Press your little finger on one side to create an elongated lip on which the dry end of the wick will rest. Fire in a kiln or dry in an oven according to package directions. Place wick and a little oil in the *dipas* and, when ready, light wick end with a match.

DIVALI TOYS – Shape animals from 2" to 3" lumps of clay; or divide clay into head, torso, and coils for making arms and legs. Use small amounts of water as glue to attach limbs, etc. to body. Make sure to work the pieces into the clay so that there are no connecting lines visible. After you fire or dry, use tempera paints and brushes to color the figures.



FESTIVALS OF FIRE AND LIGHT – CHINESE

The ancient fire festival is no longer celebrated by the Chinese people, but many ceremonies performed during Chinese festivals today derive from rites and rituals drawn from ancient folk tradition. No one knows how the Lantern Festival began. It is celebrated on the 15th day of the first lunar month at the end of the Chinese New Year festivities and about a month after the winter solstice. Participants crowd the streets carrying bamboo, paper, or plastic lanterns or dragging candle-lit pull-toys. This celebration may be a vestige of the public ceremony that the Emperors of China performed at the Altar of Heaven in Peking on the New Year and on the sun god's birthday. At the winter solstice and before the spring sowing (in January or February), they also used to officiate at rites designed to invoke heaven and earth's good fortune for the coming year.

The Kitchen God celebration, though not as widespread as it once was, is still observed by many Chinese families a week before New Year's Day. This traditional farewell to Tsao Wang, Prince of the Oven and the lord who watches over the hearth, antedates Confucianism and Buddhism and may be the domesticated version of an ancient fire festival. Tsao Wang, originally a god of fire who punished those who broke heaven's law, was also known as Tsao Chun, god of the furnace in which metals are forged. As the legendary Red Emperor who taught people how to use fire, his reign was distinguished by peace and love, which he taught could only come from kindness. The esteem enjoyed by the Kitchen God can be proved by the fact that he is often pictured as a kindly old gentleman surrounded by children, and that his brightly-colored paper image came to occupy a place of honor near the kitchen stove. There he is said to observe the behavior of each family member and annually, on the 23rd day of the 12th month, ascends to heaven to report what he has seen to the Jade Emperor. As the family addresses prayers to the kindly God, incense is burned and his image, placed in a chariot or on a horse made of paper or straw, is set on fire, the medium believed to transport the gods to heaven. A week later, on New Year's Eve, the family welcomes Tsao Wang back home with great ceremony. His bright new picture is enshrined in the kitchen for another year reminding them to think good thoughts, do good deeds, and so vanquish the evils of the world.

LOY KRATHONG – THAI

As the full moon of the twelfth lunar month is seen in the night sky, in October or November, the Thai people go down to rivers, streams, and *klongs* (canals) to celebrate Loy Krathong. The *krathong*, traditionally fashioned at home from banana leaves, is made in the shape of scalloped cups or lotus blossoms. Tissue-paper, lily, and banana leaf *krathong* in all sizes and shapes, including boats with animal figureheads, airplanes, and temples can also be purchased in the market places. After placing sticks of incense, candles, fresh flowers, and a few *satong* (small coins) in their leaf cups, families and friends kneel down at the water's edge, light the candles and incense, make a wish or say a prayer, and launch their *krathong*. Some do this from boats, and children often swim out to give their *krathong* a good start. Everybody watches as the leaf cups float down the river, for it is said that if the candle stays lit until your *krathong* disappears, your wish will come true. When the hundreds of shimmering lights are no longer visible, the skies light up with the glow of fireworks.

No one really knows how this festival originated. The Chao Phraya River, which winds its way through the country, is known as the "Mother of Waters." Since water is such a vital force in Thai life, many people say that with their offerings they are asking the Mother of Waters to forgive them for having used and soiled the water all year long. Some believe the celebration is of Hindu origin and was once a time of giving thanks to the goddess for her gifts. Others think it is a vestige of an earlier belief in the spirits of vegetation that still survives today among many farming people. Since most Thais are Buddhists, another explanation is that the festival honors the footprints left on the shores of the Nammada River by Gautama, the Lord Buddha, when he quit his earthly life. This legend recalls another that tells of the lotus blossoms that sprang up when the Buddha took his first infant steps. In Buddhism the lotus, shape of the traditional *krathong*, symbolizes the flowering of the human spirit.

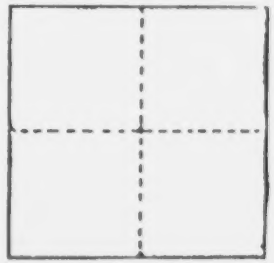
SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES: Locate Thailand on a world map or globe. Find out about Buddhism. Read from the *Jataka* tales.

LET'S CELEBRATE: Listen to festive music from Thailand; prepare a tape for your celebration.

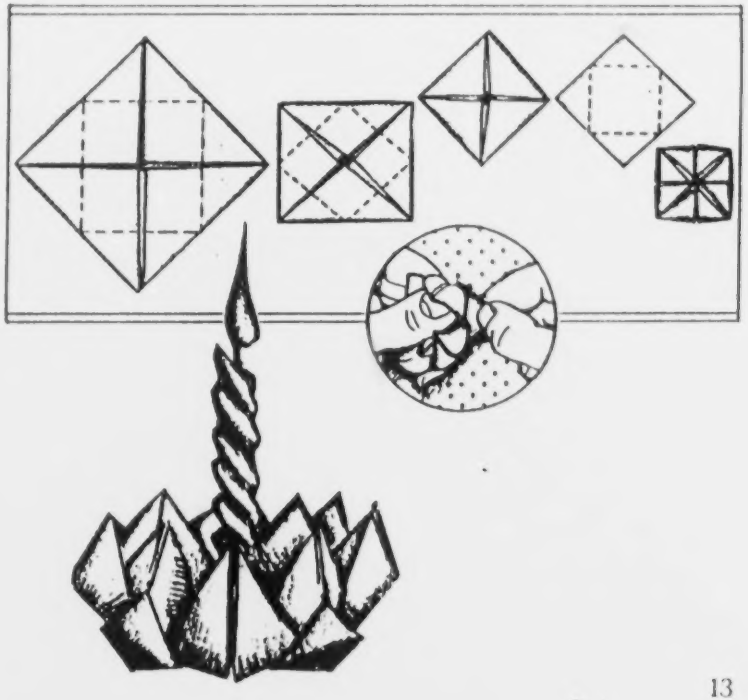
THINGS TO MAKE: LOTUS BLOSSOM KRATHONG

YOU WILL NEED: 10" or 12" square of aluminum foil; birthday candles.

Take your square and fold in half vertically and then fold in half horizontally. Open up flat so it looks like this:



Fold the corners to the center, being careful not to allow folds to overlap. Fold the newly-formed corners to the center a second time and then fold corners to the center a third time. Turn over and fold corners to the center a fourth time. Then, from the underside, unfold one petal at a time until it looks like an open blossom. Attach candle to bottom of cup with melted wax.



HANUKKAH – JEWISH

Celebrated in Israel and among Jewish people everywhere, Hanukkah is one of the few festivals in the Hebrew calendar not of Biblical origin. Beginning on the 25th day of the month of *Kislev* (usually in December), this eight-day celebration goes back over 2,000 years to a time when all that was left of the once-independent kingdom of Judah was a small, weak community in Judea (in what is now Israel), ruled by a despotic king. His plan to convert his subjects by force to Greek polytheism, by forbidding them on pain of death to practice their religion, was met with resistance by a small group of Jews under the leadership of Judah the Maccabee ("Hammer") and his brothers. Leading a rebellion to win back their freedom in the first known struggle for religious liberty, the Maccabees regained control of the sacked and burned Holy Temple in Jerusalem in 165 (B.C.E.). After restoring the Temple and rebuilding the desecrated altar, they rededicated it to God.

A legend tells that when the Maccabees came to rekindle the Eternal Light (a light that burns at all times, even today, in Jewish synagogues) of the Great *Menorah* (candelabra), they found a small flask of consecrated oil enough for only one day's kindling. But a great miracle happened there, the legend goes on to say, and the *Menorah* burned not for one day, but for eight full days and nights. From that day on Jews have commemorated the dedication (*hanukkah*) of the Temple as an occasion for rejoicing in the rescue of their religion and culture from annihilation.

The celebration centers on the simple but powerful ceremony of kindling lights on a special *menorah*, a *hanukkiyah*, containing nine candles or wicks. Eight are lit for the days of the miracle. One – the *shammas* – acts as the "lighter" and symbolizes the love and light of the human spirit. Some scholars have noted that the celebration suggests an older seasonal festival of the winter solstice during which bonfires and candlelight were ritually employed to rekindle the cold winter sun, as the lengthening days turned towards spring.

After the lighting of the *menorah*, with an additional candle or wick added each night, the evening is spent with family and friends telling riddles, singing songs such as "Ma'oz Tsur" ("Rock of Ages"), and playing games – cards, chess, and the most widespread of all, the *dreidel* game. Perhaps because light and oil are so important, the most famous holiday foods are *latkes* (pancakes), made from cheese, or more often, potatoes. In many families the custom of giving gifts to the children is a tradition dating back to a time when families gave their children Hanukkah *gelt* (money) as a gift for their Hebrew school teachers.

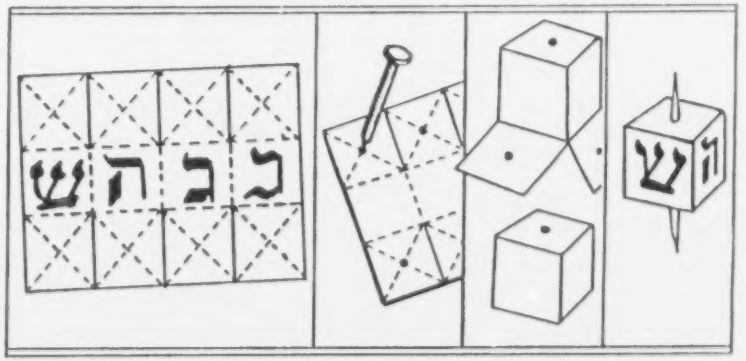
SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES: Locate Israel on a map or globe. Find out how Israelis celebrate Hanukkah. On what system is the Hebrew calendar based? Read aloud some of the stories about Hanukkah celebrations in other parts of the world. What is Hebrew? What is Yiddish? How, when, and where were they used? How and where are they used today?

LET'S CELEBRATE: Listen to Hanukkah songs on a recording. Prepare a tape for your celebration or learn the words and music. Play the *dreidel* game. Have a *latke* party with different kinds of *latkes*.

THINGS TO MAKE: DREIDEL

YOU WILL NEED: Strong lightweight cardboard, a toothpick, paints or crayon, and nail.

Make a hollow box from a flat piece of cardboard about 3" x 2¼" following this pattern:



When the cardboard is marked into squares, lay flat, upside down, and draw diagonal lines as shown. Place on a soft surface (felt or cardboard) and with a nail pierce a hole on each square where the diagonals cross. Fold and turn over flaps; anchor with tape. The holes should come together to make one center hole on the top and one on the bottom. Push a toothpick straight through the center.

The painted letters are in Hebrew:

נ	ג	ה	ש
Nun - N	*Gimel* - G	*Hay* - H	*Shin* - Sh

and stand for the words *Nes Gadol Haya Sham*, which mean "a great miracle happened there." This refers to the restoration of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem by the Maccabees when one day's supply of oil for the holy lamps miraculously lasted a whole week. This four-sided spinning top was used long ago when the Jewish people were forbidden to congregate for prayer. In order to overcome this difficulty, they pretended to play with the tops whenever they met to pray.

The letters on the *dreidel* are also the initials of Yiddish words. *Nun* stands for *nikhts* (nothing); *hay* for *halb* (half); *gimel* for *gantz* (all); and *shin* for *shtell* (put in or add). Each player puts several tokens (nuts, raisins, or pennies) in a central pot. Then each in turn spins the *dreidel* and, depending on which letter comes up, they either add to, or get nothing, half, or all the tokens in the pot. The game continues until there are no more prizes in the pot.

SAINT LUCIA'S DAY – SWEDISH

Nowhere has the arrival of the winter solstice been greeted with more joy than in the countries of Northern Europe where winters are long, dark, and bitterly cold. For thousands of years this was a time for kindling bonfires, torches, and candles to keep the darkness, with its lurking evil spirits, from coming near. The New Year, celebrated in November after the harvest, was followed by the festive Yule season. To help dispel the dread of endless winter nights, Nordic people used to gather together to share fire, food, and friendship. In earlier times a sacred tree, representing the hidden fire needed to keep the sun's fires burning, was stripped of its branches and set ablaze. This became the Yule log, brought inside to burn on the hearth, not only as a source of heat and light, but as a promise of the sun's return and the greening of the earth in spring. Yule (*Jul*), said to derive from an old Norse word for "wheel," refers to the sun's turning like a wheel from season to season.

The use of fire and light in Nordic ritual was closely associated with the seasonal cycle of birth, life, death, and renewal. According to the Julian Calendar, December 13 was the shortest day of the year. To hasten the sun's wheels towards spring, horse drawn chariots bearing a golden sun disk were raced through the fields in imitation of the sun's journey. In Norse mythology, the Sun (*Sol*) was a girl named Alfrodull ("Elf Beam") who drove across the sky in a chariot drawn by two horses. She is pursued by a wolf who, at the end of time, will catch up, seize, and devour her. The myths go on to tell of the endless winter that follows when evil will triumph and all will perish; they promise the birth of a new green world where all will live in peace and love under the wise and merciful rule of Balder ("Shining"), the young god of springtime. Slain in midsummer, he was said to rise from the dead at the winter solstice when the new sun, Alfrodull's daughter, following the same sky path as her mother, brings light to waken the earth's fertility. At the winter solstice celebration, Freyja ("Lady"), the goddess of the golden grain, was also honored. Her symbols were light, from the fiery brilliance of her necklace, and the household cat, from the two cats who drove her chariot through the heavens.

The origins of St. Lucia's Day are obscure, but its roots may be traced back to these early myths and rituals. During the period of the Vikings, when the Norse pantheon gave way to Christianity, the ele-

men... of the two religions gradually fused. Yule, like other pre-Christian festivals celebrating the birthday of the sun, became identified with Christmas, the new feast of light. December 13, the "Little Yule," continued to be observed as the day heralding the return of sunshine and the coming of the divine light of the Christ Child. During the 18th century the legend of St. Lucia was incorporated into the celebration of this day. The legend tells of an Italian girl who, on the eve of her marriage, gave away her dowry to feed the poor. The Swedish people, suffering during a time of famine, believed that Lucia had come to Sweden to feed the hungry and would return again. Pictured as a "Queen of Light" in a white dress and crowned with a halo of light, she became a symbol of the sun banishing the evil darkness of winter. The celebration of her name day pointed the way to the return of everlasting light.

Today in Sweden St. Lucia's Day is celebrated in the early morning of December 13. The eldest daughter of the family, crowned with a wreath of evergreens and lighted candles and dressed in a long white gown tied with a red sash, carries a tray laden with cups of coffee and traditional saffron buns to the members of her family. The buns are called *Lussekatter* or "Lucy's cats" because of the raisins that look like eyes. As she enters the room Lucia sings a Swedish version ("Lucius") of "Santa Lucia," an old Italian melody. Often she is accompanied by attendants in white with tinsel wreaths and belts and Star Boys wearing pointed hats covered with gold stars and carrying star wands.

This uniquely Swedish celebration is not only observed by families at home, but, in the past several decades, has become an annual event of national importance. Throughout the country thousands of official Lucias appear in towns, villages, factories, and schools. The crowning of Stockholm's newly elected Queen of Light by the year's winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature signals the official beginning of the Swedish Christmas season.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES: Locate Sweden on a map or globe. Define the following: Scandinavia, Nordic, Norse, Vikings. Who is Odin? Thor? Balder? Freyr and Freyja? How are they associated with the sun and the seasonal cycles? Read the stories of the gods and goddesses in Norse mythology. In what countries, cultures, religions, etc. were sun disks or adaptations of sun disks regarded as religious symbols? Find out how people in the Nordic countries observe the Yuletide season. What

are the origins of the Julian and Gregorian calendars?

LET'S CELEBRATE: Listen to Swedish Christmas music. Prepare a tape for your celebration of the "Lucius," the Swedish version of "Santa Lucia." Learn the words in English or Swedish. Bake *Lussekatter* for your celebration or have a parent do so. Make costumes for St. Lucia, the Star Boys, and her female attendants.

THINGS TO MAKE: STAR BOYS' CONE HATS AND WANDS

YOU WILL NEED: Large sheet of poster board or stiff white paper, scissors, transparent tape, gold foil, 12" long dowel, glue, stapler.

Cut paper into 18" square and draw a curved line from the top left hand corner to the bottom right hand corner. Cut along this line. Roll the board into the shape of a cone so that the straight edges overlap and the hat fits the size of the wearer's head when it is taped together. Draw two large five-pointed stars on cardboard and cut out. Use one as a pattern for cutting out several gold foil stars that are to be glued to the hat. Finally, cover the cardboard stars with gold foil and staple one to the point of the hat. Attach the other star to the dowel with tape.

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS – CHRISTIAN

The four Sundays before Christmas mark the Advent season. This period of preparation for Christmas is a reminder that the birthday of Jesus Christ is near. The Latin word *adventus*, meaning "a coming," has given us the English word Advent. This has traditionally been a period of fasting and repentance in many countries, with priests wearing purple vestments symbolizing penance.

Today, during Advent, many people prepare for the Christmas festivities. Advent wreaths with four candles to represent each Sunday are lit in churches and homes in Northern European countries and the United States. Christmas markets, selling crèche figures, toys, tree ornaments, and special delicacies open in Strasbourg, France; Nuremberg, Germany; Milan, Italy; and other cities. Street lights and decorations are put into place. In the Philippines, brightly-colored, star-shaped paper lanterns, or *paroles*, are hung in doorways, windows, plazas, and public buildings. These lanterns welcome people coming home from church services held at dawn each morning for nine days, starting on December 16. In many homes and communities around the world, manger scenes are set up. These range from scenes in carved gourds from Brazil to larger-than-life-size outdoor scenes in Mexico and many European countries. In some countries, such as Italy, living nativity scenes dramatically bring alive the story of Christ's birth. Other dramatic and musical events also take place. Carols, traditional and modern, are performed, often by candlelight. In Australia, such an event takes place in Alexandra Gardens in Melbourne.

The star singers of Poland, the *Gwiazdorze*, visit homes during the period between Christmas and Epiphany. These young men carry an illuminated star on a tall pole. The twirling light can be seen from a distance and the owners of each home eagerly await the visitors. Sometimes they sing *Kolendy* (carols) or offer *Szopki* (puppet shows). Similar customs are found in other Central and Eastern European countries.

The age-old symbol of the life-sustaining light may be seen in the glow of multicolored electric lights that illuminate the streets, shops, churches, and homes in many countries during the Christmas season. Like the flickering candles and blazing fires lit during ancient festivals to rekindle the divine light and heat of the sun, today's lights banish the gloom of winter's cold and darkness and celebrate the birth of a God of light, whose resurrection in spring is a promise of everlasting life.

Down through the ages, light and fire have served as elemental symbols celebrating human survival. The festivals of fire of the past, linked to those of the present, bring the generations together in celebration. The nature of the fire festivals celebrated at the summer solstice differed from those of the winter solstice. The former were usually great public gatherings in which fires were rekindled in common and whole communities danced and made merry; the latter, on the other hand, were held indoors and tended to be private or domestic in nature. Today in many countries around the world, home is the focal point for the celebration of Christmas, and the central symbol, around which the family gathers in joyful celebration, is a lighted tree of life.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES: Consult books listed in bibliography for activities related to Advent and Christmas.

POSADAS – MEXICAN

For nine nights before Christmas, the streets of Mexican cities and villages are filled with people participating in the Posadas ceremonies. The Spanish word *posada* means "inn," or "lodging," and the Biblical story of Mary and Joseph and their search for lodgings in Bethlehem is reenacted each night with solemn processions, prayers and hymns, and festive parties. The tradition of a nine-day religious pageant started in Spain during the 16th century and was brought to Mexico by Spanish missionaries. In Mexico, the tradition has grown from a religious observance in the church into a gala celebration that takes place in different homes all over the country.

Starting on December 16, evening processions are led by a child dressed as an angel and two other children carrying figures of Mary and Joseph. Children and adults, carrying lighted candles and *faroles* (transparent paper lanterns with candles inside), follow the procession through the streets. Special songs are sung or chanted and musicians may accompany the celebrants. The processions stop at several homes and ask – in song – for lodging for Mary, who is to give birth to the Son of God. They are turned away from each house until they finally reach the home selected for that evening's party. At that time, the "pilgrims" are graciously received by the hosts and invited inside. A *nacimiento*, or crèche, is set up and is surrounded by candles. On Christmas Eve *(la Noche Buena)* a figure of Jesus is also carried in the procession and placed in the *nacimiento*. The people enter, pray together, and join in singing the Posadas songs. After this ceremony, the *fiesta* begins.

The highlight of the party is the *piñata* game. Gaily colored tissue paper ruffles decorate the *piñata*, a papier-mâché figure formed around a clay pot, which may represent a donkey, a star, Santa Claus, or any fanciful object. The *piñata* is suspended from a rope strung across a courtyard. A child is blindfolded and handed a long pole with which he or she attempts to crack the *piñata* containing candies, toys, and fruit. Several children usually try to hit the *piñata* before it breaks. To make it even more difficult, the rope holding the *piñata* can be raised. Everyone dashes for the goodies when the *piñata* finally breaks. Fireworks and refreshments are also part of the *fiesta* fun.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES: Locate Mexico on a world map or globe. Find out about the origin of *piñatas*. Find out how istmas and the Christian religion were introduced into Mexico. Do research on other Christmas traditions in Mexico.

LET'S CELEBRATE: Listen to the Posadas ceremony. Learn some of the songs in Spanish. Show the film CHRISTMAS IN OAXACA. Prepare *buñuelos*, deep fried circles of dough served with a sweet syrup during the Christmas season.

THINGS TO MAKE: PIÑATAS

You may choose to make one *piñata* or several in different shapes. After the *piñatas* have dried and been filled and decorated, play the *piñata* game if space permits, or pass the filled *piñata* to members of the audience or group.

KWANZA – AFRO-AMERICAN

This holiday, now celebrated by some Black Americans, was created out of rituals borrowed from many different African harvest festivals. A relatively modern holiday, it was created during the 1960's and is intended as an alternative to Christmas. The Swahili language is used to express the ideas that are honored during Kwanza. The rituals that are used to commemorate the holiday emphasize the home, the family, the African ancestry of Black Americans, and the closeness of the black community. The Kwanza celebration begins on December 26 and lasts for seven days.

The central ritual is the lighting of the *kinara*, a candelabra with seven branches. Each night a different candle is lit, representing one of the seven basic values, the *Nguzo Saba*. The principles are *Umoja* – Unity; *Kujichagulia* – Self-Determination; *Ujima* – Collective Work and Responsibility; *Ujamaa* – Cooperative Economics; *Nia* – Purpose; *Kuumba* – Creativity; and *Imani* – Faith. The center candle should be left for the last principle, *Imani* – Faith. After the lighting ceremony a discussion takes place touching on that day's principle.

The families that celebrate this holiday set up special Kwanza tables. The symbols of the festival are placed on a straw mat, the *mkeka*, which symbolizes tradition as the basis of the holiday. The *kinara* represents the first Africans. Ears of corn, one for each child in the family, surround the *kinara*. A unity cup, the *kikombe*, carved from wood or coconut, and tropical fruits and vegetables are displayed. Gifts, or *zawadi*, are usually given to children on December 31 when the adults hold their *Karamu*, a feast with African food and music.

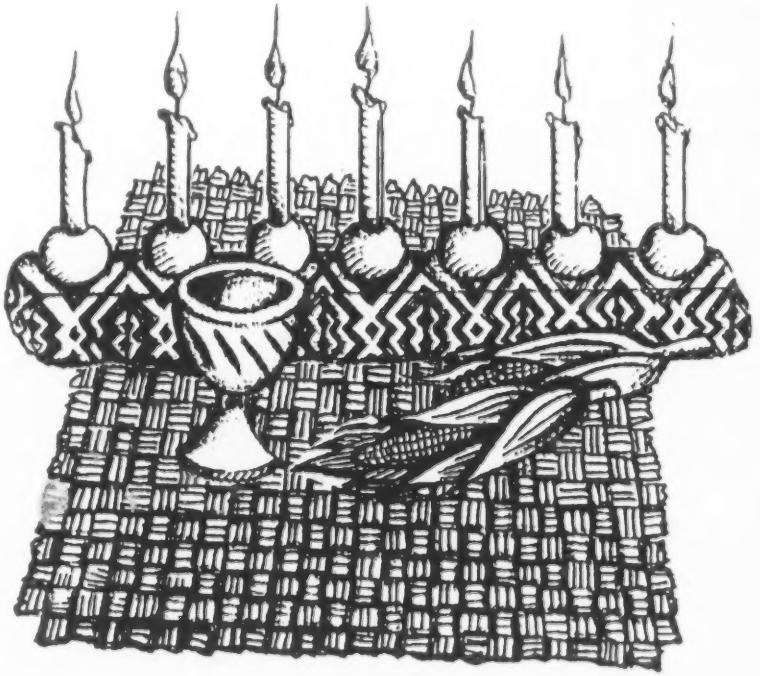
SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES: Locate Africa on a map. (Note that Africa is a continent made up of many nations and that the Kwanza celebration uses traditions that have come from many different parts of Africa.) Find out about African harvest festivals and harvest festivals that occur in other parts of the world. Why is Swahili used to express the ideas, traditions, objects, etc. in the Kwanza celebration?

LET'S CELEBRATE: Listen to African music; prepare a tape for your celebration; prepare some dishes from different African countries for a *Karamu*; decorate a Kwanza table.

THINGS TO MAKE: KINARA

YOU WILL NEED: Self-hardening clay, pointed clay modeling tool or an orange stick, tempera and brushes, candles.

Follow the instructions that come with clay. Make a base for the *kinara* by forming a straight slab of clay. A good size would be 12" long, 2" high, and 2" thick, but you can choose your own size. To make the holders for the seven candles, roll seven small balls of clay and make a hole in each by placing the end of the candle you will be using into the ball and then removing it. Glue the holders onto the base by using water to make the pieces stick. Decorate base with incised designs and let dry; when dry, paint it.



A "FESTIVALS OF LIGHT" CELEBRATION

PREPARATIONS

1. Book a room or auditorium large enough to seat 30–40 guests (or more) plus your group.
2. Send out invitations or notices.
3. Book any films well in advance.
4. Put up decorations or exhibits (*paroles*, sun masks, *nearikas*, *piñatas* filled with candy, small toys, pennies, etc.)
5. Make sure equipment, objects, and personnel are in place.

EQUIPMENT

– Film projector (if you are using film) and screen
– Slide projector (for slide set)
– Two cassette players or one cassette player and one record player (one for slide set narration and one for music)
– One to two tables, depending on size

Note: Candles drip. To avoid getting wax on table, cover with heavy plastic table cloth. DO NOT USE PAPER CLOTH.

OBJECTS

See under individual holidays

PERSONNEL

– Someone to project film(s) and slide set
– Someone to operate cassette and/or record players
– Someone to turn lights on and off

A "FESTIVALS OF LIGHT" CELEBRATION OUTLINE (1½ to 2 hours)

For each holiday section, follow this basic format:

1. Use current UNICEF Wall Calendar; point to date of holiday; explain how calculated (calendar used) and whether holiday is a fixed date or movable.
2. Tell reasons why each holiday is celebrated.
3. Turn lights off; show appropriate slides and play cassette narration.
4. Turn equipment off and invite guests to come to the table to light the appropriate *dipas*, candles, etc. while room is still dark. Have matches available. Play festive music for each segment on second cassette player. Turn lights on for any other activities. Change to the next recording or tape.
5. Blow out candles or lights.

A. Introduction: Honoring the Sun

1. Historic overview of sun worship, symbolic importance of fire and light among the ancient Egyptians, Sumerians, Incas, etc.; their use during mid-winter festivals among the Persians, Greeks, Romans, and Nordic peoples; fire and light in celebration today. (Slides 1–9)

B. Divali—Hindu (movable)

1. Tell reasons for celebrating Divali (focus on Rama/Sita and Lakshmi); customs. (Slides 10–13)
2. As festive Indian music plays have participants light *dipas*. Then pass Divali toys.

OBJECTS: *Dipa* lamps with vegetable oil and wicks; Divali toys; Indian festive music.

C. Festivals of Fire and Light—Chinese

1. Relate ancient fire festival to modern Lantern Festival and Kitchen God celebration. (Slides 14–16)

D. Loy Krathong—Thai (movable)

1. Explain festival's significance emphasizing Buddhist explanation; lotus symbol; customs. (Slides 17–21)
2. As festive Thai music plays, light *krathong*.

OBJECTS: *Krathong* with candles; festive Thai music.

E. Hanukkah—Jewish (movable)

1. Explain historical background; significance of legends associated with lights; customs, including foods and *dreidel* game. (Slides 22–26)
2. As Hanukkah music plays, invite nine people to light candles.
3. Have five or six members of audience play *dreidel* game. Use chart to show what each letter looks like and what it means.

OBJECTS: Hanukkah *menorahs*; candles; Hanukkah music; *dreidels*; chart showing Hebrew letters on *dreidel*.

F. St. Lucia's Day—Swedish (December 13)

Before beginning, select one girl to be dressed as St. Lucia and several other girls and boys to be dressed as her assistants and the Star Boys.

1. Explain significance of pre-Christian rites; importance of light

Norse mythology; legend of St. Lucia; customs including *Lussekatter.* (Slides 27–32)

2. As "Santa Lucia" song plays, St. Lucia and her attendants enter the darkened room with tray of St. Lucia buns and pass them out.
3. Light Swedish angel chimes and/or Yule candle.

OBJECTS: St. Lucia's, Star Boys' and assistants' costumes; St. Lucia's crown; Star Boys' pointed hats and star wands; angel chimes; Yule candle; buns.

G. Advent—Christian (movable)

1. Use current UNICEF Wall Calendar or Advent calendar; explain how celebrated; where and how observed; how observed by groups in your community. (Slides 33–43)
2. Light wreath as group sings or recording of holiday music is played.

OBJECTS: Advent wreath; recording of holiday music; Advent calendar (optional).

H. Posadas—Mexican (December 16–24)

1. Explain origins and meaning of celebration; customs. (Slides 44–45)
2. If you are using film, show CHRISTMAS IN OAXACA (8–10 minutes, from the *piñata* scene up to narrator's appearance at the end).
3. If you are not going to play the *piñata* game, pass the *piñata* so that the audience can take candy from it. Play record or tape of *piñata* song. If you have enough room, explain that everyone will play the *piñata* game at the end of the program. Make sure when you play that there is someone in charge of raising and lowering the *piñata;* someone in charge of blindfolding the players; and someone in charge of keeping the children out of the way of the stick. (Children sometimes run forward before they should and the stick may cause injury.)

OBJECTS: CHRISTMAS IN OAXACA (film); Posadas music; *piñata* filled with hard candy (be sure to calculate how many pieces each person may be allowed); stick; blindfold; rope.

I. Christmas—Christian (December 25)

Note: Some Christian denominations celebrate Christmas on another date.

1. Talk about various customs, especially those having to do with light and fire (e.g., candles, Yule log, tree decorati · talk about customs observed by ethnic groups in your community; invite comments from audience. (Slides 46–64)
2. You may want to show THE CHRISTMAS TREE or CHRISTMAS IN GERMANY: A STORY OF GIVING. (See bibliography)

OBJECTS: Film

J. Kwanza—Afro-American (December 26–January 1)

1. Tell history. Refer to harvest festivals in various African countries; explain principles for which each candle is lit and symbolic foods. (Unfortunately, slides were not available.)
2. Light *kinara;* festive African music is played.

OBJECTS: Mat; several ears of corn; fruit; *kinara;* candles; festive music.

K. Festival of Lights

You may want to light the candles and wicks for all the holidays that have been celebrated. As candles are lit, play some additional music. An international buffet would make a fine ending to this program.